DECEMBER, 1931

JOURNAL OF CALENDAR REFORM

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The World Calendar

JANUARY						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	..	..	..	..

FEBRUARY						
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19	20	21	22	23	24	25
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MARCH						
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APRIL						
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MAY						
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JUNE						
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JULY						
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AUGUST						
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SEPTEMBER						
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OCTOBER						
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29	30	31	..	..	..	..

NOVEMBER						
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19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	..	..

DECEMBER						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
..	..	..	..	..	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

YEAR DAY, December Y, follows the last day of December every year. In Leap years LEAP DAY, June L, follows the last day of June.

The World Calendar regulates the twelve-month year. It is balanced in structure, perpetual in form.

The twelve months are multiples of halves and quarters. The equal quarters consist of 3 months; the first month has 31 days; the remaining two have 30 days. These quarters also comprise 13 weeks or 91 days, of which 13 days are Sundays and 78 are weekdays. Each month has 26 weekdays.

The odd 365th day of the year, Year-Day, is considered as an extra Saturday between December 30th and January 1st. The 366th day in Leap Years, Leap-Day, is considered as another extra Saturday between June 30th and July 1st. These days are tabulated December Y and June L respectively, by which method the 31-day months begin the quarters. It is recommended that these two supplementary days be considered by the United States as holidays. January 1st, New Year's Day, always falls on Sunday, and the working-week begins the following day.

The revised twelve-month year in its even quarters conforms to the seasons, recognizing natural laws. Comparisons are easily obtained; changes involved require a minimum of adjustment; expenses are not increased for business and the consumer; religious and secular holidays are stabilized; and the transition from the old to the new order is made easy by the retention of the twelve-month year.

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DATE OF EASTER

From the London Times

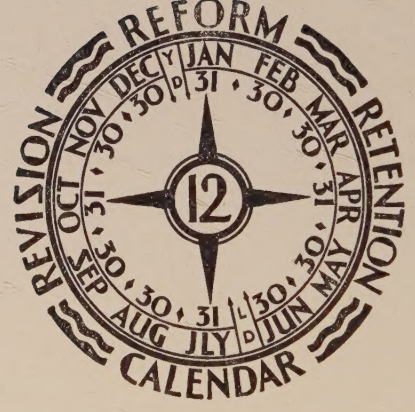
THE decision of the League Conference, not only in recommending the fixation of Easter but in not recommending any more sweeping change in the calendar, is similar to that of a League Committee of 1923. If Easter were fixed in the manner proposed it could vary only from April 9 to April 15 instead of from March 22 to April 25 as at present.

The decision of the Conference is merely a recommendation to the Council of the League of Nations. The Council may endorse the recommendations, but the final decision rests with the Governments of the various autonomous States. Much depends on the attitude of the Holy See, as the most powerful organ of Christian feeling, on a subject where religious feeling is paramount and where uniformity is highly desirable. The Vatican has not so far expressed approval or disapproval of the change, but has contented itself with saying that there is no dogmatic objection to a fixed Easter.

It may be wondered why the Church has made Easter a movable feast depending on a complicated rule, whereas Christmas is fixed. The answer lies in the origin of the feast, which is obscured by its English and German names but is well brought out in Greek, in the Romance languages, and even in Dutch and Welsh. In these languages the name is connected with the Hebrew Passover, which was itself a movable feast due to the Jews using a luni-solar calendar. The Passover was the fourteenth day of the first month of the year—i.e., the month whose fourteenth day fell on or after the vernal equinox. Some time elapsed before Easter was celebrated by the Christian Church, and when it did its date gave rise to controversy, as it has done ever since. Some, mostly Jewish Christians in the East, insisted on celebrating Easter always on the fourteenth day of the first month, the day of the month that Christ was crucified; others, mostly Gentiles in the West, were adamant that it should be kept on the first day of the week, the day of the week that Christ rose from the dead.

In 159 A.D. Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, conferred with Anicetus, Bishop of Rome, on the subject, but no agreement was reached. In 197 A.D. Polykrates paid a similar visit to Victor, and Victor's threat to excommunicate the East, restrained by Irenæus, is the first known act in a long series of "Papal aggressions." By 325 A.D., when the Council of Nice was summoned, the Western cause had almost triumphed. The Council were unanimous that Easter should always be kept on a Sunday, irrespective of what day of the week the fourteenth day of the month might be; and the duty of calculating that Sunday was assigned to the astronomers of Alexandria, whose bishop was to communicate the result to the See of Rome.

With the exception of a few nonconformists, who were wittily taunted as "Quartodecimans," Easter has been kept on a Sunday ever since. But the question which Sunday is not easy to settle. The Nicene Fathers, not knowing the astronomical difficulties, had given a rule which is by no means easy to follow—namely, the Sunday following the full moon which falls on or next after the vernal equinox. In practice the date of Easter was settled by an arbitrary equinox (March 21) and an arbitrary full moon, and cycles were invented by which the date of Easter could be found at a glance for any year of the cycle. At first a cycle of eight years was adopted, then one of 84 years, while in 457 A.D. Victorius of Aquitaine introduced his cycle of 532 years. Ultimately a cycle of 19 years —originally discovered by Meton, the Athenian astronomer—was found to be most satisfactory, and it is that adopted in the Prayer-book.



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